

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): Method of packaging a thick but malleable frozen dessert and dispensing the frozen dessert under pressure in an expanded state, the method comprising:

placing the frozen dessert in a first compartment of a rigid receptacle container equipped with a dispensing member and a piston that divides the receptacle into the first compartment and a second compartment, then, after having put the dispensing member in a closed position, pressurizing the containerrigid receptacle using by injecting a propellant gas into the second compartment of the rigid receptacle to a pressure great enough to ensure dispensing, given the consistency of the frozen dessert to be dispensed and characteristics of the dispensing member comprising:

using a propellant gas in the second compartment which is virtually insoluble in the product to be dispensed;

using an expansion gas in the first compartment which is different from the propellant gas and highly soluble in the frozen dessert to be dispensed in order to expand the frozen dessert when it is dispensed, the amount of expansion gas used depending on the degree of expansion desired on dispensing, the expansion gas being homogeneously dissolved in the frozen dessert by putting the expansion gas in contact with the frozen dessert product in a freezer and

passing the containerrigid receptacle having the frozen dessert through a freezing tunnel at a temperature that allows the frozen dessert to form a pasty state then dispensing it by opening the dispensing member, the said frozen dessert being expanded to the desired degree, determined prior to filling, by expanding the expansion gas which is completely dissolved therein.

Claim 2 (currently amended): Method according to claim 1, comprising treating an ice-cream mix in a freezer, which is supplied with expansion gas so as to partially freeze and partially expand the ice-cream mix, under temperature and pressure conditions promoting good sufficient dissolution of the expansion gas in the ice-cream mix so as to provide an expanded product.

Claim 3 (previously presented): Method according to claim 1, wherein a gas that is highly soluble in the frozen dessert is used as the expansion gas.

Claim 4 (currently amended): Method according to claim 1, wherein nitrogen (N₂) or compressed air having a dewpoint less than the minimum temperature to which the container rigid receptacle will be subjected between manufacture of the product and its use is used as the propellant gas.

Claim 5 (currently amended): Method according to claim 1, comprising placing a partly frozen and partly expanded mix in the container rigid receptacle by means of a metering device ensuring the pressure is kept as close as possible to the initial pressure in the freezer, in the pipes and in the metering unit so as to limit the expansion of the volume of the product during filling by partial expansion of the expansion gas.

Claim 6 (currently amended): Method according to claim 1, comprising using a metering nozzle moving with an up and down movement as a filling device, allowing filling by rising from the bottom of the container rigid receptacle so as to optimize the filling and to prevent the formation of pockets free of product.

Claim 7 (currently amended): Method according to claim 1, wherein the container rigid receptacle is filled with the frozen dessert before expansion of the frozen dessert occurs.

Claim 8 (currently amended): Method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~container-rigid receptacle~~ is filled through the dispensing member, a piston being positioned adjacent and under the dispensing member prior to the dispensing member filling the ~~container-rigid receptacle~~.

Claim 9 (currently amended): Method according to claim 1, ~~wherein comprising using a rigid receptacle as a container, into which the product to be packaged comprising the amount of expansion gas needed to obtain the desired expanded state of the dispensed product is introduced into the first compartment of the rigid receptacle, and the propellant gas is introduced into the second compartment of the rigid receptacle~~ at the pressure desired for the dispensing.

Claim 10 (canceled):

Claim 11 (currently amended): Method according to claim 91, ~~wherein comprising using a rigid cylindrical receptacle as a container, in which receptacle a sliding piston is placed, which divides the receptacle into two compartments, one of which is the first compartment is closed by the dispensing member while the other second compartment has a valve enabling the propellant gas to be injected, the product to be dispensed being introduced into the rigid receptacle from the side of the first compartment closed by the dispensing member.~~

Claim 12 (original): Method according to claim 1, comprising lowering the temperature of the frozen dessert to a value below -10° C., and it is stored and used by the consumer at this temperature.

Claim 13 (previously presented): Method according to claim 1, comprising treating an ice-cream mix in a freezer, which is supplied with expansion gas so as to partially freeze and partially expand the said mix, the freezer operating at a temperature of about -8° C. to -12° C. at an output and at a constant pressure equal to atmospheric pressure up to 10 bars above atmospheric pressure.

Claim 14 (previously presented): Method according to claim 1, wherein the expansion gas is selected from the group consisting of nitrous oxide (N₂O), carbon dioxide and combinations thereof.

Claim 15 (previously presented): Method according to claim 1, wherein the temperature of the product is lowered to a temperature ranging from -15° C. to -20° C.

Claim 16 (currently amended): Method of packaging a frozen dessert, and for dispensing it under pressure in the expanded state, in a system wherein the product is placed in a first compartment of a rigid receptacle~~container~~ equipped with a dispensing member and a piston that divides the receptacle into the first compartment and a second compartment, the rigid receptacle~~said container~~ being pressurized by a propellant gas comprising the steps of:

using a propellant gas which is virtually insoluble in the product to be dispensed is chosen, the propellant gas being injected into the second compartment;

using an expansion gas which is different from the propellant gas and highly soluble in the product to be dispensed, the expansion gas being homogeneously dissolved in the product to be dispensed by putting the expansion gas in contact with the said product in a freezer, the expansion gas being introduced into the first compartment; and

passing the ~~container~~rigid receptacle having the product through a freezing tunnel at a temperature that allows the product to form a pasty state then dispensing it by opening the dispensing member, the product being expanded by expansion of the expansion gas that is dissolved therein.